



The President's Daily Brief

November 24, 1975

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Exempt from general
declassification schedule of E.O. 11652
exemption category 5B(1),(2),(3)
declassified only on approval of
the Director of Central Intelligence

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PORTUGAL

Major Melo Antunes, the leader of the anti-Communist ruling faction, has warned that the country will be plunged into civil war if Prime Minister Azevedo's government falls. Antunes, interviewed by a French newsweekly magazine, said the Communist Party is preparing to seize power and that the result of the ensuing struggle will be a return to fascism.

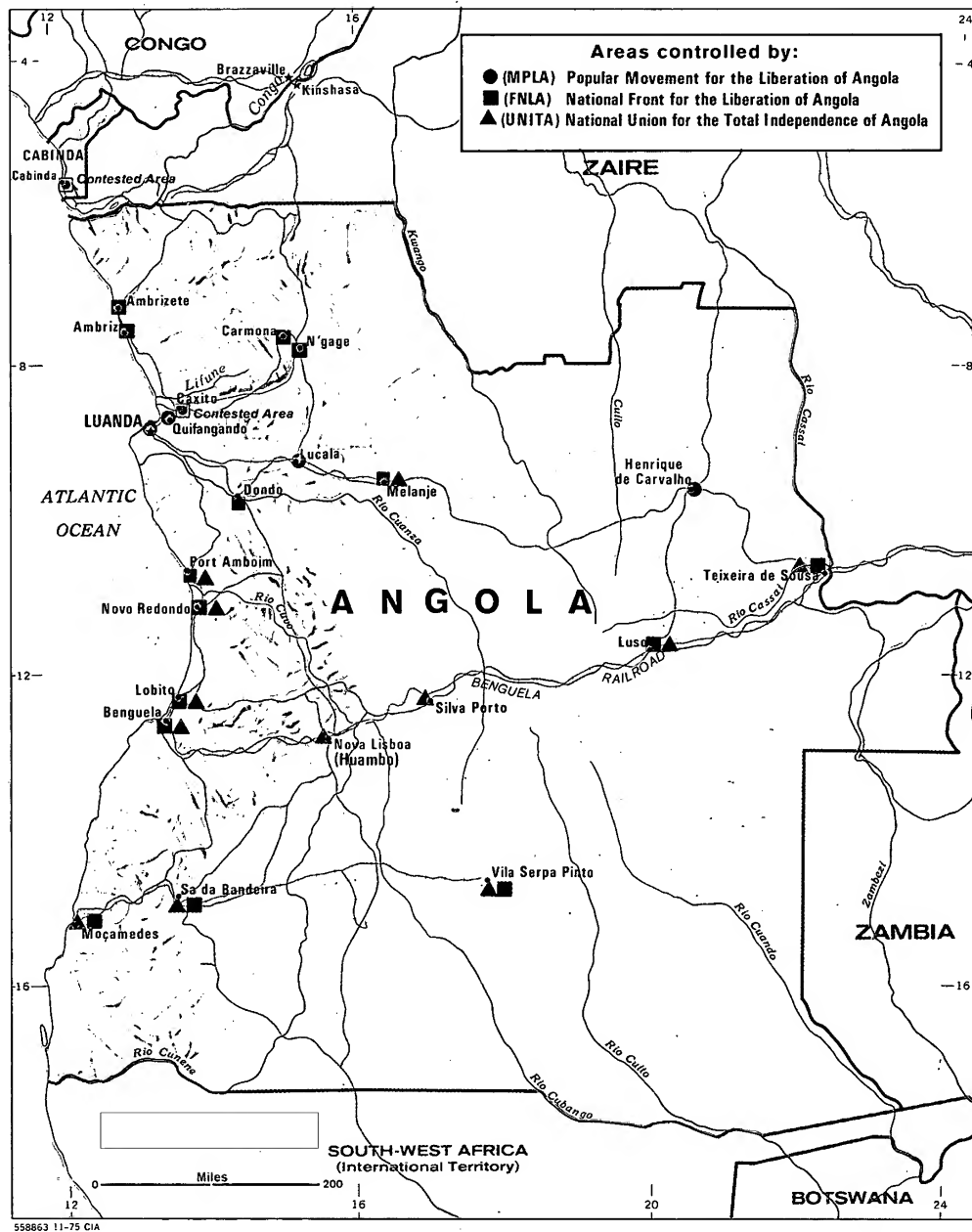
The Communists, Antunes said, are engaged in a campaign to subvert the armed forces and paralyze the state, but will wait until the country becomes ungovernable to make their move. Government paralysis, he said, has reached an advanced stage.

Socialist party leader Mario Soares seconded Antunes' attack on the Communists at a party rally yesterday in Lisbon. He called on the Communists to leave the government and said that the non-Communist ministers had no intention of resigning. Soares said that the Socialists would take up arms if necessary in order to defend democratic freedoms.

Like Antunes, Soares blamed the present government impasse on Communist subversion of the military, but the Socialist leader severely criticized President Costa Gomes for allowing his actions to be too easily influenced by pro-Communist demonstrations.

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So far the government's ultimatum to Costa Gomes to restore authority in the military has been a failure. When the government's demands were put before the Revolutionary Council last week, the council not only criticized the government, but revived a scheme to establish direct ties between the military and the people which is anathema to the democratic parties.



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ANGOLA

The Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola accelerated its operations north of Luanda over the weekend and is exerting heavy pressure on the forces of the National Front for the Liberation of Angola and the Zairian army.

The combined Front-Zairian force [] is showing signs of demoralization and disarray. Following heavy rocket attacks, the Front has abandoned its positions near Quifangando and retreated in disorder towards Caxito. [] the Front may have even abandoned Caxito and may now be trying to establish a new defensive line along the Lifune River. Movement forces apparently remain in the vicinity of Quifangando but may soon try to push north if the Front's disarray continues.

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Somalia's call for an emergency meeting of the Organization of African Unity to discuss the situation in Angola is gaining momentum. Supporting Somalia's proposal are the ten African states that recognize the Popular Movement's "government" in Luanda and other states that are sympathetic toward the Movement but still adhere to the OAU's request to remain neutral.

African backers of the Popular Movement under Agostinho Neto clearly hope to use the meeting to gain official OAU endorsement of the Neto regime as the legitimate government of Angola. The consent of 30 of the OAU's 46 members is required to convene an emergency conference; Somalia has so far obtained the approval of 21 nations for its proposal.

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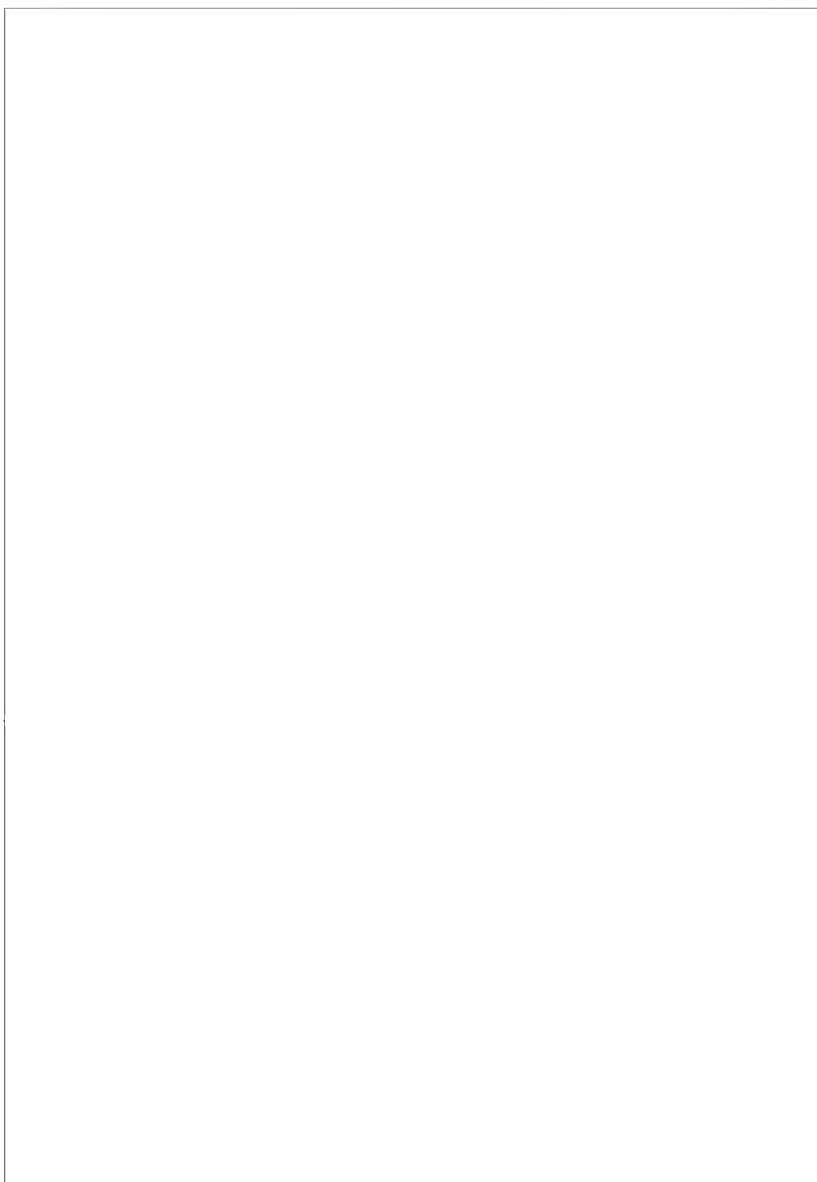


NOTE

Lebanon's political leaders are demoralized following the collapse of the three-week-old ceasefire. They acknowledge that they have run out of ideas for negotiating peace.

Prime Minister Karami said on Friday that "Lebanon is on the verge of collapse." The statement apparently was an attempt to shock the country's warring factions into stopping the fighting. President Franjiyah had scheduled a major address for Lebanon's national day on Saturday, but canceled it at the last minute.

The talks between Karami and Franjiyah that are supposed to result in specific proposals for political and economic reforms have not yet begun. The national dialogue committee apparently will meet today despite the increase in fighting. The session will be important as an indicator of whether the country's principal political groups remain interested in negotiating a settlement.



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USSR

We present the key judgments of National Intelligence Estimate 11-3/8-75, Soviet Forces for Intercontinental Conflict through the Mid-1980s, which was approved last week by the US Intelligence Board.

In this estimate, we call particular attention to current and prospective developments which could markedly increase Soviet strategic capabilities during the next ten years:

--The Soviets are steadily deploying new types of ICBMs. In about 1980 they will have a force of up to 900 missiles of these types, most of them with MIRVs. They are also moving ahead with the development of several ICBMs beyond those now being deployed.

--The capability of the Soviet ICBM force to destroy US Minuteman silos is growing. It will probably pose a major threat in the early 1980s. A more rapid increase in this threat is possible but unlikely.

--The Soviets have the potential to make the task of penetration by bombers to targets in the USSR considerably more difficult by 1985 than it is today.

--The Soviets are pursuing extensive research and development in such areas as submarine detection and defensive lasers.

Large Uncertainties

We also call attention to the large uncertainties about some aspects of Soviet strategic policy and forces, especially about the quality of key weapons and supporting systems in the future. Forecasts of the strategic environment over the next ten years must therefore be made with varying degrees of uncertainty:

--It is almost certain that, despite prospective improvements in Soviet forces, the USSR will not acquire deployed forces capable of launching a nuclear attack so effective that the US could not cause devastating damage to the USSR in retaliation.

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--It is probable that US and Soviet strategic capabilities will remain in roughly equal balance,* although the long-standing US qualitative superiority in strategic weapons and supporting technology will come under increasing challenge.

--It is possible but unlikely that the Soviets will acquire capabilities that would be perceived as providing them with more strategic power to back up their policies than that available to the US.

Offensive Force Developments

In strategic offensive forces, the Soviets continue their broad program of major improvements. The trends are about as we had forecast in last year's estimate, but the diversity of the ballistic missile submarine program and the potential hard-target capabilities of ICBM systems are somewhat greater than we had expected. The main things we have learned during this past year are:

--The new ICBMs are being deployed at a moderate pace. About 100 of the new ICBMs, most of them with MIRVs, are now operational in new and converted hard silos. In accordance with the Interim Agreement, the Soviets have started to deactivate older, soft ICBM launchers in exchange for new SLBM launchers.

--Despite some continuing developmental problems, the new ICBMs are estimated to have better accuracies and higher yields than we had expected, implying somewhat better capabilities to destroy hard targets like Minuteman silos.

*The Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence, Department of the Air Force, believes there is little reasonable doubt that the Soviets are striving for general strategic superiority over the US by the end of the next decade. If the current massive Soviet R&D programs achieve the breakthroughs being sought, an important shift in the USSR's favor in the strategic balance could occur by 1985.

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--Development of a land-mobile ICBM could now be complete, but there is as yet no sign of its deployment.

--Two and possibly three models of ballistic missile submarines capable of carrying long-range SLBMs are believed to be in production. A new and large type of ballistic missile submarine may have started construction. A new small SLBM and a new or modified large SLBM have begun flight testing; a MIRV payload has very recently been identified on the latter.

--The Soviets continue to maintain only a few ballistic missile submarines on patrol stations. Limited probes near North American coasts were conducted this year, possibly portending changes in patrol patterns. There is also an increasing number of SSBNs with missiles of sufficient range to reach targets in the US at any given time, even without leaving port.

--The Backfire bomber has been deployed in small numbers this year, both in Naval Aviation and in Long Range Aviation at bases occupied by intermediate-range bombers. The Backfire has extensive capability for use in various missions in Eurasia and for naval missions over the open seas. We continue to believe it has capabilities for operation against the continental US. There are differing views within the Intelligence Community about Soviet intentions to use it for this purpose.

--We have obtained no confirmation of Soviet hints that a new heavy bomber is being developed.

--There is no evidence that the Soviets are developing long-range cruise missiles, but they have the design and development experience to be able to do so.

Defensive Force Developments

The Soviets continue to devote more resources to strategic defense than they do to forces for intercontinental attack. In addition to routine improvements in what is by far the largest air defense system in the world, the following are the main developments in Soviet strategic defenses we have noted during the past year:

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--The Soviets continue to construct ballistic missile detection and tracking systems to close small gaps in existing coverage, to increase their assurance of reliable warning, and perhaps to provide some additional warning time.

--They are placing additional emphasis on surveillance systems and training for defense against aircraft at low altitudes, though there are no indications of major improvements in performance.

--We have obtained additional evidence supporting earlier indications that nuclear warheads are available for a significant number of Soviet surface-to-air missiles.

--The Soviets continue their research and development on ABM systems (at a pace not significantly reduced from that which existed prior to the ABM Treaty), on radars, on SAMs designed for low-altitude air defense, and on directed-energy systems which probably include lasers with capabilities against low-orbiting satellites.

--They have continued their extensive investigation of techniques for overcoming their deficiencies in detecting and tracking SSBNs at sea. Soviet attempts to trail US SSBNs near our operating bases have resulted in no known successes.

Soviet Objectives

Our judgments about the strategic objectives of the Soviet leaders are based on what they say (in public and sometimes in private), on what we observe of their programs, and on our appreciation of the internal and external forces operating on them in the present period of risky opportunities. It is apparent that they see no contradiction between their policies of detente and arms-limitation negotiations and their continuing buildup of strategic forces.

Much that we observe in their present posture and programs can be attributed to a combination of traditional defensive prudence, a military doctrine which stresses war-fighting capabilities, superpower competitiveness, worst-case assumptions about US capabilities, and a variety of internal political and institutional factors.

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But the scope and vigor of these programs, at a time when the USSR has achieved a powerful deterrent as well as recognition as the strategic equal of the US, raise the elusive question of whether the Soviet leaders embrace as an objective some form of strategic nuclear superiority over the US.

Deeply held ideological and doctrinal convictions impel the Soviet leaders to pose as an ultimate goal the attainment of a dominant position over the West, particularly the US, in terms of political, economic, social, and military strength. We do not doubt that, if they thought they could achieve it, the Soviets would try to attain the capability to launch a nuclear attack so effective that the US could not cause devastating damage to the USSR in retaliation.

Although the Soviet leaders may now entertain some hope--and, in the view of some agencies, already believe--that US resolve as a strategic competitor is weakening, they know realistically that the US need not concede the USSR a superior position in the next ten years. Nevertheless, they are probably striving for a strategic posture which has some visible and therefore politically useful advantages over the US and which would give the USSR better capabilities than the US to fight a nuclear war.

Objectives Under SALT II Accord

The Soviets probably view SALT as having the potential for limiting the costs and risks of the strategic arms competition. Their objectives for the SALT process probably include constraining US options (especially in areas where they fear they may be less able to compete), and leaving open their own options to the extent possible.

Considering the history of Soviet strategic policy and force improvement programs, we believe that under a SALT II agreement based on the Vladivostok accord, the Soviets would probably seek in their strategic programs:

--To ensure deterrence of all forms of nuclear attack on the USSR.

--To improve war-fighting capabilities, aimed at the survival of the USSR as a national entity should deterrence fail.

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--To counterbalance, with both peripheral and intercontinental forces, the combined nuclear strengths of the US and its allies and of China.

--To narrow or close the gap between the US and the USSR in important weapon technologies and to hedge against future US force improvements.

--To acquire strategic advantages, real or perceived, should US behavior permit.

Without SALT II Accord

If a SALT II agreement is not achieved, we believe that the Soviet leaders' objectives for their strategic forces would be much the same. But they would be free of SALT II restrictions, which would have forced them in 1977 to make a small reduction in the number of their intercontinental delivery vehicles, and thereafter to have confronted the difficult choices involved in trading old weapons for new to stay within the 2,400 aggregate ceiling.

In the absence of such restrictions, we would expect the Soviets to build and retain strategic offensive forces larger than the limits proposed at Vladivostok and considerably larger than US programmed forces. Increases in force levels would be especially likely if US-Soviet relations significantly worsened. In any case, the Soviets would not expect quantitative competition to alter the strategic balance.

Implicit in the Vladivostok accord was a Soviet judgment that the USSR could not achieve significant advantages over the US by continued competition in numbers of strategic weapons. The Soviets have evidently come to recognize that the strategic environment in the 1980s will be affected most importantly by the qualitative aspects of the forces of the two sides. Their progress in this area will be largely independent of SALT II.

Dramatic near-term changes in Soviet strategic policy would not be likely under a post-Brezhnev regime. The policies now being pursued have emerged from the interplay of many factors which would remain unaltered. To the extent that Brezhnev as an individual may be a moderating influence, any changes would likely be in the direction of increases in strategic capabilities, especially if SALT II fails to produce an agreement.

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Other adjustments in Soviet policy for strategic forces could result from the USSR's own technological advances or from US-Soviet confrontations over the next ten years. Finally, changes could emerge in response to US force developments such as improvements in hard-target kill capabilities; deployment of small, accurate long-range cruise missiles; and concepts and options for the selective use of nuclear weapons in limited intercontinental warfare.

Future Capabilities

Varying degrees of uncertainty characterize our estimates of Soviet strategic policy and of the quantity and quality of Soviet forces. Forecasts for the next few years can be made with relatively high confidence by extrapolating from current evidence.

For the period of primary concern, five to ten years hence, estimates of system characteristics and force composition must be based on very limited evidence and indirect considerations. A SALT II agreement based on the Vladivostok accord would considerably reduce quantitative uncertainties about forces for intercontinental attack.

We warn, however, that uncertainties about the quality of strategic weapons and forces--which exist now and will persist in the future--are in some areas large enough to affect judgments about important aspects of the future strategic balance.

Future Offensive Forces

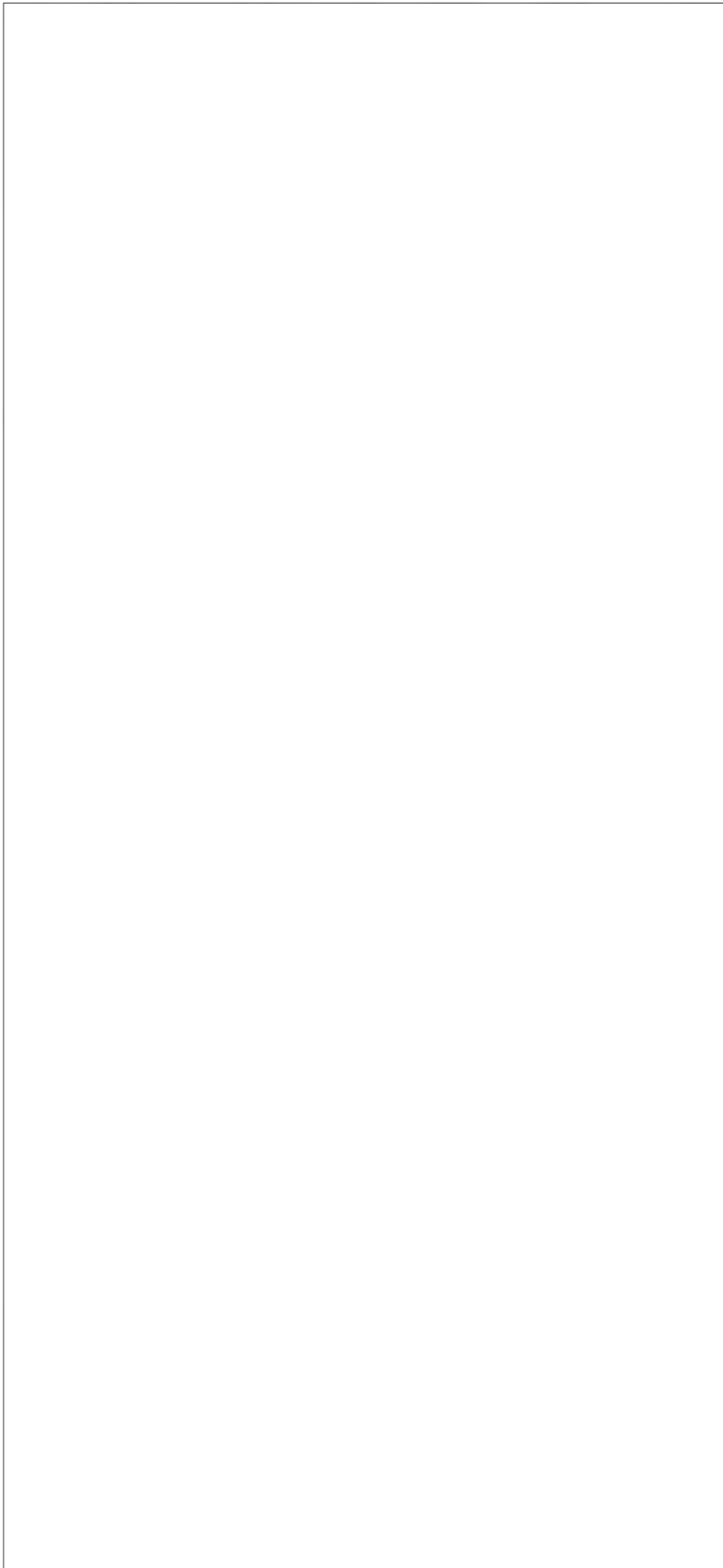
Our best estimate of Soviet offensive force development over the next ten years, assuming a SALT II agreement, is that deployment of new systems will continue at about the pace now demonstrated, that ICBM accuracy will continue to improve, and that force survivability and flexibility also will improve. Soviet ICBM forces will probably pose a major threat to US Minuteman silos in the early 1980s, assuming that the Soviets can perfect techniques for precisely timed two-RV attacks on a single target. This is somewhat earlier than forecast last year.

Moreover, by the early 1980s Soviet offensive forces will lead programed US forces in numbers of missile RVs, though the US will retain a large lead in the total number of missile and bomber weapons combined.

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We have examined a number of other alternatives for future Soviet forces, which are all plausible but not equally consistent with past trends and current evidence. These range from (a) a force the Soviets might regard as meeting minimum requirements for strategic parity and military effectiveness against currently programed US forces under a SALT II agreement, to (b) a force the Soviets might build if the SALT process failed, US-Soviet relations worsened, and the Soviets achieved high rates of deployment and technological advance.

The principal differences in the countersilo capabilities of these alternative forces are encompassed by the large range of uncertainty in our estimates of such key weapon characteristics as ICBM accuracy. At the more threatening but highly unlikely extreme of this range of uncertainty, Soviet ICBMs would pose a major threat to Minuteman silos by the end of the 1970s.

The Soviets could increase the threat against US bombers on alert by deploying some of their SSBNs closer to the US coastline to reduce the potential warning time of an attack. In assessing the military advantages of adopting this more threatening posture, the Soviets would have to consider planned introduction of the B-1 bomber and countermeasures available for existing bombers.

We believe the Soviets would conclude that the US could preserve the survivability of most of its alert bombers against attacks by SLBMs throughout the next ten years.

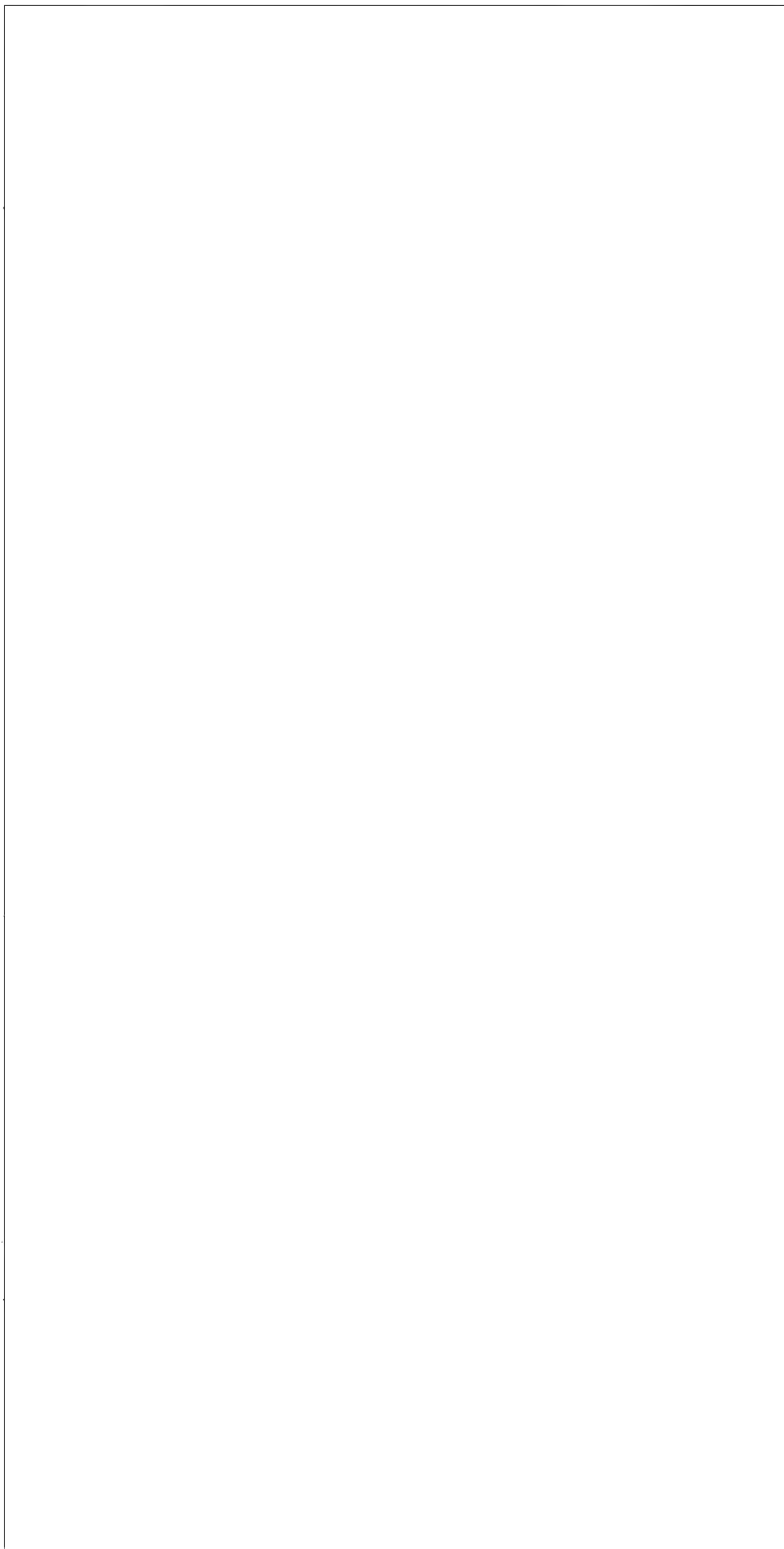
Future Defensive Forces

In the field of strategic defense, it is unlikely that the Soviets will significantly improve their low-altitude air defenses before 1980. The most likely improvements we foresee in their air surveillance and control, interceptors, and SAM systems would have the potential for overcoming most of the technical deficiencies in their capabilities to counter low-altitude bombers by 1985, but it might be possible for them to do so earlier with a very high level of effort. Assuming rapid and widespread deployment of such systems, low-altitude penetration of Soviet air defenses by bombers will be considerably more difficult by 1985 than it is today.

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The actual effectiveness of Soviet air defenses, however, would continue to depend heavily on the degree of degradation resulting from ballistic missile strikes and on the performance of US electronic countermeasures and bomber penetration aids and tactics. Neither we nor the Soviets would likely be able to predict these effects with confidence.

The future effectiveness of Soviet defenses against ballistic missile submarines on patrol will depend in large part on how successful the Soviets are in detecting and tracking SSBNs in broad ocean areas. From our understanding of the technologies involved and research and development programs in the US and the USSR, we conclude that the Soviets have little potential for achieving success in either of these areas in the next ten years.

Moreover, improvements in US SSBNs and expansion of their operating areas will compound the Soviet problem of finding, tracking, and attacking them. These judgments must be qualified, however, by gaps in our knowledge [redacted] of possible future Soviet developments.

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The Soviets will almost certainly continue to develop their strategy and capability for detection of SSBNs, and we expect improvements in their capabilities to detect and destroy SSBNs in confined water areas. We conclude, however, that these improvements will not overcome deficiencies in open-ocean detection and submarine tracking, and that Soviet ASW capabilities will fall short of being able to prevent most US submarines on station from launching their missiles.

Formidable Problems

Despite prospective improvements in their forces, the problems and uncertainties which the Soviets would face if they contemplated attacking the US would remain formidable for the next ten years:

--The Soviets would be uncertain about the outcome of an attack on US Minuteman silos and would probably expect a considerable number to survive.

--They would almost certainly consider their ASW forces to be unable to locate and simultaneously destroy more than a few US ballistic missile submarines at sea.

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--Under the ABM Treaty their ABM defense would be insignificant.

--They would still not have high confidence in their ability to defend against US bombers.

--They would probably expect their civil defenses to be able to preserve a political and economic cadre and to contribute to the survivability of the Soviet Union as a national entity, but they would have to expect massive casualties, industrial destruction, and a breakdown of the economy.

Under these circumstances, with the forces and weapons we can foresee, it is extremely unlikely that during the next ten years the Soviet leaders would come to believe that either side could launch an attack which would prevent devastating retaliation. During the period, however, Soviet offensive forces will gain considerably relative to the US in such quantitative measures as missile throw weight and missile RVs, although SALT II limits would establish and preserve symmetry in total delivery vehicles and MIRVed missile launchers.

Furthermore, the long-standing US qualitative superiority in strategic weaponry and supporting technologies will come under increasing challenge. Under the most threatening but unlikely circumstance of very rapid Soviet technological advance, especially if combined with a large Soviet buildup in the absence of a SALT II agreement, the USSR could achieve capabilities that might be perceived as giving it more strategic power to back up its policies than that available to the US. Foreseeable Soviet strategic forces, however, would not eliminate the USSR's vulnerability to retaliation.

A crisis resolution, therefore, probably would not rest on the strategic weapons balance, but rather would depend on other factors, such as the comparative strengths and dispositions of US and Soviet conventional forces.

We have reexamined Soviet R&D programs and prospects for major advances in fields having strategic offensive and defensive applications that might seriously erode US deterrent capabilities. We have given particular attention to lasers for use in air and missile defense and to systems for

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detecting and trailing US ballistic missile submarines. The Soviets are working actively in both fields, and there are gaps in our knowledge of this work.

The available evidence, together with our appreciation of the physical, engineering, and operational hurdles which must be overcome, leads us to rate as small the chances that the Soviets can sharply alter the strategic balance through technological advance in the next ten years.*

Nevertheless, the scope and progress of Soviet R&D, particularly in strategic air defense and ASW, bear especially close watching in the years ahead.

**The Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence, Department of the Air Force, believes that the USSR is embarked on a directed-energy weapons research program of such magnitude that it could have a major if not decisive impact on the strategic balance before 1985.*

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